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FEATURED

## Trees at airport being removed for safety

By Laura Bacon Staff Writer Sep 6, 2018 Updated Sep 6, 2018



AUDUBON - People passing by the Audubon Airport have noticed some changes to the landscape around the airport. Lou Herbers, chairman of the Audubon County Airport Authority told the Audubon County Supervisors on Tuesday that trees were being removed as part of an obstruction mitigation project. Herbers said it came down to FAA requirements and safety.

At the south end of the airport taxiway a pilot's view of incoming traffic was obstructed by the trees. A pilot could taxi into the path of an incoming aircraft because they were unable to see it, Herbers explained.

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1m18XhFDj0KM8wjquXdz0DJ11g\\_uQaPx](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1m18XhFDj0KM8wjquXdz0DJ11g_uQaPx)

On the north end of the runway numerous trees were designated an obstruction by the FAA because of their height. Every year more trees were added to the list as they continued to grow. "I was hearing from pilots that were flying in that the trees were really close on the north side," he said.

The good news, he said, is that the state will cost share - an 85 percent share - in the expense of removing the trees. The total project cost is \$15,000, with the airport's share \$2,250. Herbers got two bids for the project, and submitted them to the state. Within a week he had received written approval. "So we're in the process of removing trees as weather allows. The trees will be piled and allowed to dry for several months before burning them in early winter. The area will be levelled and seeded to grass in the spring."

Herbers consulted with Bruce Haag, Audubon County Conservation Director, and Shawn Bohlmann, Audubon Public Works Director before beginning the project and got their okay. Herbers said he was also working with the city to mow the cleared area with a bush hog in coming years so obstructions don't grow back.

With Haag receiving some calls over the weekend about the trees being removed, Herbers said, "We just wanted to let people know why we had to take them down."